

VZCZCXRO3844
RR RUEHROV
DE RUEHDJ #0554/01 1781251
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 261251Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9345
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RHMFIUU/CJTF HOA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DJIBOUTI 000554

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E, S/CT AND EEB/ESC/TFS
LONDON, PARIS, ROME FOR AFRICA-WATCHER
CJTF-HOA FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KTFN](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [ETTC](#) [DJ](#)

SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI: EFFORTS TO FIGHT TERRORIST FINANCE

¶1. SUMMARY: During a May 28 seminar co-sponsored by Post and the Central Bank of Djibouti, over thirty participants from the Central Bank, local commercial banks, money transfer operations, and the GODJ Technical Counterterrorism Committee discussed Djibouti's progress in combating terrorist finance. The seminar featured a keynote address from Africa Regional Services (ARS) speaker Robert Smolik, an overview of GODJ action to date on terrorist finance issues from Djibouti's Financial Intelligence Unit, and lively discussion among participants. The Central Bank, which had specifically requested that the visiting ARS Speaker address this topic, also invited the participants and hosted the event. The Central Bank and several participants thanked the USG for collaborating on the workshop, and local state-run media featured prominent coverage of the event. END SUMMARY.

¶2. To open the half-day workshop, ARS Speaker Smolik gave a brief introduction on the subject of combating terrorist finance, including an overview of USG action and objectives in the area. Alongside Smolik's presentation, the chief of Djibouti's Service de Renseignements Financiers (SRF, the equivalent of a Financial Intelligence Unit) summarized Djibouti's actions to date in combating terrorist finance.

¶3. Djibouti's SRF Chief outlined some of the legislative and administrative tools Djibouti has established to combat money laundering and terrorist finance. After the creation of a National Counterterrorism Committee in October 2001, the GODJ adopted a National Action Plan calling for 1) the ratification of all international conventions regarding terrorism, 2) the integration of international norms into national law, and 3) the adoption of a national anti money laundering law.

¶4. Djibouti made progress on this action plan by passing an anti money laundering law in December 2002, and by ratifying nine additional international instruments against terrorism between 2004 and 2006. Djibouti is now party to twelve international anti-terrorism instruments, including the:

- 1963 Aircraft Convention, ratified 1992
- 1970 Unlawful Seizure Convention, ratified 1992
- 1971 Civil Aviation Convention, ratified 1992
- 1973 Diplomatic Agents Convention, ratified 2004
- 1979 Hostages Convention, ratified 2004
- 1980 Nuclear Materials Convention, ratified 2004
- 1988 Airport Protocol, ratified 2004
- 1988 Maritime Convention, ratified 2004
- 1988 Fixed Platform Protocol, ratified 2004
- 1991 Plastic Explosives Convention, ratified 2004
- 1997 Terrorist Bombing Convention, ratified 2004
- 1999 Terrorist Financing Convention, ratified 2006

¶5. As Djibouti's SRF Chief pointed out, the GODJ has yet to ratify four additional instruments:

- 2005 Nuclear Terrorism Convention
- 2005 Amendments to the Nuclear Materials Convention

--2005 Protocol to the Maritime Convention
--2005 Protocol to the Fixed Platform Protocol

¶6. Djibouti's two newest counterterrorism tools are the National Technical Counterterrorism Committee, established February 2007, and the Service de Renseignements Financiers (SRF), established March 2006. The SRF receives declarations of cash transactions over 1 million DJF (USD 5650), and of other suspicious transactions. Both financial and non-financial institutions must declare transactions whose "complex and inhabitual character" makes them suspect. The SRF, which follows strict confidentiality rules, has the ability to freeze transactions for two to eight days.

¶7. Following the SRF Chief's presentation, ARS Speaker Smolik facilitated an animated discussion among participants. Topics included the mandate to "know your customer," and the need for public education about regulations governing financial transactions. While some participants said that it was now "normal" for customers to show identification when doing financial business, some money-transfer company representatives said that it would help their businesses--which operate in a competitive environment and have few staff members to meet regulatory requirements--if there was a clear public information campaign about the "standard" requirement to show identification when making a money transfer.

¶8. COMMENT: By providing an expert, French-speaking ARS presenter, Post was able to help the Central Bank bring together a wide variety of stakeholders to review Djibouti's progress on combating terrorist finance, and to discuss ideas for future action. Through direct participation and press coverage, the seminar gave the GODJ a chance to showcase recent progress, while at the same time raising awareness of the need for continued action. END COMMENT.

DJIBOUTI 00000554 002 OF 002

LIST